MONTEREY NEWS

December 2021
Est. 1970 Vol. LI · Number 12

Pick up at: the library (in and outside), outside town hall, transfer station

Monterey's veterans in November 2009. *See page 4 for this year's ceremony.*
Front row (l-r): Ed Stencel (Korea), Morton Sternberg (WW II), Tom Haugh (Korea). Middle (l-r): Alf Pederson (WW II), Steve Pullen (Vietnam), Jules Dahlman (Korea), Dean Amidon (WW II), Dick Tryon (WW II), Osborne Dugan (WW II). Back row (l-r): Eugene Bounous (WW II), George Emmons (WW II), Martin Cherneff (Korea), Frank D'Amato (WW II), Ian Jenkins (Vietnam). —Photo by Bruce McAlister

I go uphill to the top of our garden and orchard, the only real clearing we've got, and watch for the sparkle of live fire through the trees of the horizon, when the sun speaks to us all.
Our White Pines page 11

Steve's thoughts on how more than forty years after their service veterans are still suffering, means we should not forget either.
Veterans Day page 4

We've lost our national marbles. That could be a good thing. After all, it's time we stopped playing games like marbles, where the point is to win them all, pick them up, and go home.
Here's a Thought page 14

Pantry PickUp has been rescheduled to Thursdays, December 23 and 30. page 2

I used to like storms—but now they are often too freakish to fully enjoy. Every year the weather nomenclature expands to fit the new weather anomalies.
Weather Report pages 16–17

Beth Gilmore has made the transfer station a destination, and for twenty-six years she has also done another job for the town—keeping the library shining.
Keeping the Library Shining page 13

Join South Berkshire Kids for this weekly, parent-child program that will include free play, story time, songs, and more!
Play Group at the Library page 2

I am hereby notifying the Monterey Select Board that I am boycotting (my civil disobedience) any future meetings in which Steve Weisz is chair.
Boycotting the Select Board page 9

"Every government record in Massachusetts is presumed to be public unless it may be withheld under a specifically stated exemption."
Public Document Requests page 22

Peter Murkett commented that a recall process would provide the town with a consistent way for dealing with conflict.

Steve Pullen countered that it is hard enough to get people to fill offices, and characterized the recall proposal as "undemocratic" and a "travesty."
Special Town Meeting pages 6 to 8

There are many people to thank for the success that we have been able to enjoy over the past twenty months, and we find ourselves filled with gratitude.
Tree of Gratitude page 3

Solstice Shadows page 15

Monterey Renewable Energy Board

At my own request, the select board has appointed me to a one-year term on the Monterey Renewable Energy Working Group. This official town undertaking is so new that I am the sole appointee so far. Any town resident interested in joining the effort may email the town administrator (admin@montereyma.gov) seeking appointment.

The group's work is to research prospects for generating renewable energy in Monterey at greater than residential scale. A project might be sited on town property, funded and owned by the town; alternatively, it might involve a combination of private and public resources. The intent is to consider all aspects of photovoltaics or any other renewable source of energy. These include funding, cost, and maintenance, as well as environmental and aesthetic impact; energy conservation will also be a focus. The group will report back to the select board with its recommendations.

My hope is to convene a tightly focused group dedicated to thorough consideration of all options, followed by action reducing our dependence on burning fossil fuels.

—Peter Murkett

Pantry PickUp News

The Pantry PickUp has been a tremendous success in helping those in our community needing extra support. We are very grateful to all who have donated their time, money, or food this past year to make The Pantry PickUp possible.

Because Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Saturdays this year, we will be re-scheduling The Pantry in later December as follows:

When:
Thursday, December 23, noon to 1:30 p.m.
Thursday, December 30, noon to 1:30 p.m.

Who: Pantry PickUp is open to all residents of south Berkshire County. There are no income guidelines and shoppers are welcome to visit every week all year. Food is distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Where: Monterey United Church of Christ, 449 Main Road, Monterey, MA 01245.

What: The Pantry offers fresh fruit and vegetables as well as milk, eggs, cheese, meat or chicken, and canned goods.

The Pantry will distribute more than 1,200 boxes of food this year, serving at least forty Monterey residents per week. More than twenty-five community volunteers are engaged in picking up food from our suppliers, sorting it for distribution, and in many cases, delivering it to our neighbors who are unable to come to The Pantry.

Please help us continue this valuable work by making a donation during this holiday season of giving.

Financial donations are tax deductible and may be made to the Pantry by a check to the Monterey United Church of Christ. Please write Pantry PickUp on the memo line and also on the front of the envelope. Mail checks to: Monterey United Church of Christ, ATTN: Pantry, PO Box 182, Monterey, MA 01245.

—Andrea DuBrow

Play Group at the Monterey Library

Beginning Thursday, December 2, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.,we are excited to be back at the Monterey Library, 452 Main Road! Join South Berkshire Kids for this weekly, parent-child program that will include free play, story time, songs, and more! Best for families with children ages birth to five. This program is free and open to the community, no registration required. Masks will be required.

Visit southberkshirekids.org, or call (413) 464-5095 for a calendar of activities in south county towns and other information.

South Berkshire Kids is fully funded by the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant provided by the MA Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).

—Jessica Maloney
CFCE Coordinator

Tree of Gratitude

The Friends of the Monterey Library invite you to come add to our "Community Tree of Gratitude."

There are many people to thank for the success that we have been able to enjoy over the past twenty months, and we find ourselves filled with gratitude. We are so grateful that we wanted to start a "Community Tree of Gratitude" this holiday season. This way we can all share and celebrate how much we have accomplished by coming together during this difficult time. Please stop in to the library and add to our tree. Share what or for whom you are grateful.

The tree will be up in the lobby through the end of the year, so please stop in anytime that the library is open. We hope that you will help us create a tree that is overflowing with gratitude and joy this holiday season.

See the back page for the library schedule.

—Carey Vella
Friends of the Monterey Library

Monterey Community Center

The community center was hopping in November! We provided space for the usual small groups for social and recreational participation, and also live theatre: a play written and performed by Stephanie Sloane, produced by Brian Budak, directed by Linda Josephs, with Maggie Barkin as stage manager.

Stephanie Sloane's "Perfect Storm" included the actor Kim Bradley of Tyringham in its three performances. This play reading consisted of Stephanie's musings on "Love, Loss, and Transition." She shares her feelings of grief with the loss of her husband of many years, and the loss of normalcy during the pandemic. She lived in New York City during the beginning of Covid and then moved back to Monterey where she had lived as a youngster, then later with her husband, and now as a widow. Kim Bradley plays the ghost of her husband, responding to her declarations of grief with his own remarks of love. He wishes her well in this next chapter, knowing that her creativity will help her find her way. If you are able to see this production on video or performed live, you may find many of her sentiments relatable. Bradley was part of the cast this summer in "The Women of Tyringham."

November after Thanksgiving featured the Second Annual Chestnut Roasting (including a talk and a tasting) and a wreath-making afternoon with Catherine Hurst who brings the tradition from Europe to Monterey.

Thursday, December 9: At 2 p.m., and every second Thursday of the month in the future, we will have a public health nurse at the MCC for a wellness clinic. This is a great place to get your blood pressure or weight checked, or to discuss your medicine regime.

Friday, December 10: At 4 p.m., we will once again have "Meditation for Turbulent Times" with Sandrine Harris of Kinesoma. Call or email to preregister and let us know if you will attend in person or on Zoom. Leave a message at (413) 528-3600, or email calendar@ccmonterey.org.

Friday, December 10: At 6 p.m. (no longer at 5:30), Aldeth Lewin will be hosting game night for all ages. Bring your own favorite board game or come and choose amongst the many that Aldeth brings.

Adult Beginning Painting Class

In January, we will be starting a beginner's painting class for adults with Margaret Buchte (her painting above) on Saturday, January 8, at 12:45 p.m. Preregistration required (see below). The cost is $5 per session, and the MCC will send a list of materials to bring.

Ping-pong, is currently planned for 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturdays, but check out the announcement on our website, ccmonterey.org, as the yuletide nears.

Please contact us if you would like to be in a class learning how to use Zoom, or how to use it better.

We welcome your ideas about classes, programs, performances, and social events. Currently we are asking everyone to wear a mask and be vaccinated, and depending on the activity we are limiting attendance indoors to twenty persons (fewer if it involves exercise).

To preregister, or for further information, call (413) 528-3600, or email calendar@ccmonterey.org.

Thank you to all who helped the community center thrive amidst a challenging year.

—Mary Makuc
Community Center Coordinator

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Veterans Day–Some Still Suffering the Burdens

On Thursday, November 11 more than forty people gathered on the lawn and parking lot of the library around the WWI monument to commemorate Veterans Day. Thanks to Julio Rodriguez for making arrangements in advance as he was out of town. Many veterans were in attendance. The Monterey Council on Aging provided coffee. The new public address system donated by the Friends of the Monterey Library was used for the first time. Liz Goodman gave an invocation and read a poem, while Ilene Marcus, with some assistance from Dan Lewin, rang the church bell at precisely 11 a.m.

Steve Pullen stepped up as a veteran of the Vietnam War and told us what it meant to deal with the memories of when he served our country. He and many of his fellow soldiers have realized over the years that they had symptoms of Post-traumatic-stress-disorder (PTSD). One friend, Paul Choclis, is disabled because of PTSD and other issues. His apartment was recently sold and he is facing being homeless. Another fellow soldier, Stephen Mockbee, was shipped home wounded and carried the effects of those injuries his whole life.

— Photos by Maureen Banner

He was a successful contractor, but even up until he died in March he was still having flashbacks and trouble sleeping. Steve encouraged everyone at the ceremony to publicly remember other veterans.

It doesn't matter how or why these veterans found themselves in the situations they did at this point. What Steve wants us to remember is that they were there to serve our country, and he is concerned that our country should not forget the sacrifices they made. Steve's thoughts on how more than forty years after their service veterans are still suffering, mean we should not forget either. Observing Veterans Day is one way to honor them, but they are also in need of assistance in so many other ways. Steve challenged us to seek out what we can do to help them in their time of need.

—Mark Makuc

Steve Pullen

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Veterans Day

On November 11, Veterans Day was honored in Monterey this year, just as it is year after year. Veterans of all ages attended as did their family members. The special prayers by Liz Goodman and reflections by others this year were particularly appropriate and deeply significant for those of us who gathered on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month—the day World War I ended. Steve Pullen shared the experiences he had keeping in touch with those who were overseas with him after returning to the States. For me, it brought back vivid memories from my fiftieth high school reunion dinner. All attendees who were in military service during the same years Steve was (the Vietnam era) were asked to stand up and be recognized. It was both deeply shocking and emotionally uplifting to find nearly all the men and several of the women stood behind their chairs.

Such celebrations in Monterey bring with them the same shared spirit, the same joy in renewal of deep connections to others here. It does not matter if we were draftees or volunteers, we know Monterey will celebrate not just recent service and sacrifice but that of others who served from Monterey in past wars.

—Bob Rausch

Fiber Connect Update

Broadband Drawing

If you are wondering if the New Year will bring you luck, the answer is perhaps yes if you are a current Fiber Connect customer. With the New Year, Fiber Connect is launching its "Broadband Drawing" wherein all customers—both residential and business—will be automatically eligible to win one month of free internet service. Our team will conduct a random drawing on the first of each month, starting on January 1, with the free month of service applied to the following month's bill. Notified winners can choose to have their name announced or remain anonymous, and will be eligible again after a twelve-month period. Fiber Connect phone and other optional add-on services will not be affected—the broadband drawing will apply only to internet service.

Community Fund & Subsidy Program

But wait, there's more. Fiber Connect will give the winners the option to donate their one-month savings to a newly established community fund whose purpose is to aid customers facing temporary and/or unexpected hardships on a monthly level. Fiber Connect will match all donations to the community fund, dollar for dollar.

In addition, the recently launched Low Income Subsidy Program is another way Fiber Connect is offering financial assistance to households in Monterey. As part of our agreement with the Town of Monterey, we offer qualifying households 50% off our standard installation and 50% off monthly broadband and Wi-Fi services. Eligibility is determined by a household member's participation in one or more federal and/or Commonwealth financial assistance programs. Since the program launched on November 1, we've received several applications and, with thanks to the applicants for their patience, we are working through the verification process. For details on the program and where to apply, please visit bfcma.com/lowincomesubsidyprogram.

Current Buildout Status

As for the current status of our build in Monterey, we have finished deploying fiber along Route 23 and Route 57 and all roads leading off of Route 57. We continue to negotiate "make ready" costs for the rest of Monterey not yet wired. ("Make ready" is the work needed to be done on the poles by the owners to accommodate the fiber optic cables.) We do not have a timetable from pole owners, National Grid and Verizon, for the make ready and until we do, we are unable to reasonably predict our build schedule. Though the town-wide 50% discount on our standard installation ended on October 31, the same discount will continue to apply to any neighborhood not yet wired. If you have questions regarding your eligibility for the discount, please contact our team by emailing sales@bfcma.com, or calling (413) 429-4109.

One final update. Fiber Connect is offering an optional Wi-Fi 6 upgrade to all of its customers. Wi-Fi 6 is the latest iteration in wireless technology and is mesh capable. Wi-Fi 6 APs (access points) are available to lease at $8/month per access point. We also continue to lease Wi-Fi 5 managed mesh systems for $6/month per access point. For more information, please contact us at support@bfcma.com, or visit our website bfcma.com/what-are-fiber-connects-services.

—Adam Chait
Fiber Connect CEO

Special Town Meeting
November 6, 2021

The purpose of the annual town meeting, usually held on the first Saturday in May, is to approve all the expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year and to deal with any legal or governmental issues that require a town vote. Ideally, this should all happen in one meeting, leaving everything set for the new fiscal year. However, more and more, there are issues or expenses that come up sometime later in the year and cannot wait for the next annual meeting. This was the case when 106 voters came together in the firehouse pavilion on November 6, a sunny but decidedly chilly afternoon.

Karen Shreefter tried to set the tone for the meeting by requesting a moment of silence in memory of David Grover, a former Monterey resident and beloved local musician, who had recently passed away. She noted that, "His mission was to bring people together," which was an aspirational sentiment for this meeting. That done, the actual business began. The first four articles were passed quickly.

Article 1 requested a transfer of $91,500 from free cash to cover the costs for self-contained breathing apparatus for the fire department. Select board chair Steven Weisz explained that while a grant had been submitted to cover the cost, the town only received $33,000 and the transfer was needed to pay for the remaining costs of this vital apparatus. A unanimous voice vote approved the transfer of funds.

Article 2 concerned an amendment to the departmental revolving fund by-law to establish two new revolving funds under the auspices of the conservation commission for the wetlands protection act and the scenic mountain act. Susan Cooper wanted to know why the budget for the scenic mountain act was so small. Weisz responded that there were very few applications for it, and with that a voice vote approved the article.

Article 3 asked voters to approve a transfer of $300 from free cash to pay for a bill for the town clerk. Select board member Justin Makuc made a motion to remove the phrase "submitted after the deadline to pay" in order to have it be consistent with the other articles and this motion was passed. The article required a nine-tenths vote to pass and moderator Mark Makuc warned the crowd that if he heard even one "no" in the voice vote, the vote would need to be counted. Duly warned, the voters unanimously passed the article by voice vote.

Article 4 was another one that was easily passed and involved transferring $2,400 from the Visiting Nurse Services to a new account titled Public Health Services. Weisz explained that the current visiting nurse had resigned and a replacement could not be found. Kay Purcell added that the visiting nurse had been part of Berkshire Health Systems and now Tri-Town Health Services in Lee will provide a nurse for the next three years.

The easy part of the meeting was over and Articles 5 and 6 resulted in more passionate discussion.

Article 5 asked the voters to transfer $10,000 from free cash to pay for an independent investigation of personnel issues. The conflict in the Monterey Town Hall has been common knowledge for some time, playing out in the *Monterey News*, the Monterey-Community Google group, and most recently in the *Berkshire Eagle*. Makuc started the conversation by saying that the select board had unanimously agreed for an independent investigation and the matter at hand was simply to fund this process. When pressed for some more details, he replied that he could not discuss personnel matters. Weisz said that he felt the best way to solve the problem would be for the parties involved to talk it out, but since that was not an option, the investigation was the second-best way. Susan Cooper wanted to know how many complaints were being investigated, which resulted in some hedging among the select board members and the new town counsel, Brian Riley, with no definitive answer. Hillel Maximon expressed the opinion that it was unreasonable to be asked to spend $10,000 without knowing the issues at hand. Kate Ryan questioned whether conflict resolution methods might

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be employed rather than an expensive investigation. Don Coburn then took the floor and said that most of the complaints were "picayune" and "nonsense," not involving the select board, but mostly about human relations. He advocated for saying "no" to the proposed article because enough time and money had been wasted.

Susan Cooper retorted that any complaint about harassment or sexual harassment should be taken seriously and facts should be uncovered. She commented that you should not say to an employee, "I'm sorry you're being harassed but hopefully it will go away." Karen Shreefter suggested starting with arbitration and "pretending we are adults," before embarking on an investigation. Mary Makuc advised the group to trust the select board since they had been voted in and those present didn't know the details about the charges. At that point, select board member John Weingold questioned how Don Coburn had knowledge of the complaints and suggested that since he was under no confidentiality restrictions, perhaps he could discuss them. Coburn indicated that there were three from a select board member and three or four, perhaps more, from the town clerk about people making her life difficult. Susan Cooper questioned, somewhat heatedly, how Coburn had this information, adding that someone had violated the confidential nature of the issues. Coburn responded that these were a matter of public record.

Ed Mandelbaum expressed his distress over the current upheaval, saying, "I came to Monterey because it is so beautiful. The *Berkshire Eagle* article was embarrassing. The beauty is being ruined." He suggested a "do-over" by having all the current select board members resign, saying, "Do we want to keep this going on? Enough!" This suggestion, while refreshing, was not taken up by the participants. Michele Miller made another suggestion to "dial it back" and to make a conscious effort to put the conflicts behind us. She made a motion to table the article and a voice vote was taken that was not conclusive. When cards were counted, the motion to table failed, 48 to 51.

The arcs of bare trees. *—Photo by Lin Saberski*

Jonathan Levin spoke next saying that if the allegations are accurate, you can't have the people involved (referring to the select board) handling the investigation. Mayra Rodriguez asked "Why are we arguing about spending $10,000 to learn to get along? Do you want to have people keep on bickering? We need to find the truth." Ellen Coburn commented that anyone can file a complaint and say whatever they want. She said, "'Words matter. They mean a lot," and suggested that somebody independent might be able to sort out the problems without spending $10,000. At this point, Steve Pullen asked to call the question and a card count of 75 to 22 achieved the necessary two-thirds vote to do this. When the vote was taken on Article 5, it passed with a vote of 60 to 35.

Article 6 was a citizen's petition to approve a by-law authorizing recall elections. Emotions still ran high with the discussion. Don Coburn spoke first, indicating that a mistake had been made in the drafting of the article treating this as an "ordinary by-law" which would be sent to the attorney general's office. Coburn said he had been advised by town counsel that, as this concerns election laws, a petition to the MA General Court (the Massachusetts legislature) for a special act creating a recall election procedure for the Town of Monterey, was the appropriate measure. Coburn made a motion to amend the article to reflect this change.

Moderator Mark Makuc commented that this was as sloppy as any other citizen petition and should be researched beforehand to be tight and clear. He said, "This is >

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Special Town Meeting, cont. page 7
not what people signed a petition for," but allowed that it was still relevant to a recall election and let it stand. Coburn clarified that the changes were to the introduction of the article not the substance, and Ellen Coburn added that they wanted to make sure the petition went through the proper process. Peter Murkett commented that a recall process would provide the town with a consistent way for dealing with conflict. Jonathan Levin made a motion to call the question and this received unanimous approval. A voice vote on the amendment was less conclusive as many people were standing outside the pavilion in the sun in order to keep warm and it was difficult to distinguish the number of voices on the yes and no sides. A card count resulted in passage of the amendment with a vote of 83 to 3.

Mr.Coburn was not done however, as he proposed three more minor amendments having to do with wording, each of which easily passed. Then it was Jonathan Levin's turn to propose additional amendments to the article, one of which would require the Town Clerk to deliver the certified petition with 15% of registered voters to the select board within seven days, which was readily passed. (There was no stated time period in the original wording.) The other proposed amendment sought to change the wording that an officer to be recalled would automatically be placed on the ballot without nomination. Levin suggested that going through the normal nomination procedure would ensure checks and balances. This amendment passed with a vote of 65 to 9. Levin proposed yet another amendment for a wording change and this also passed.

Barbara Swann stated a few facts about recall elections, following her comments that she has studied the town of Monterey like the small Japanese village she studied while working on her Ph.D in political anthropology. She noted that of the 351 towns in Massachusetts, only 170 have sought permission to have recall elections. Of the forty-seven recall elections since 2010, only five officials have been defeated. Swann warned, "It doesn't happen overnight. It's only a 50-50 chance even if you have everything in place." Ellen Coburn commented that even though the petition seems to be directed at a particular person, "It will be used with the seriousness it deserves. One person is just a blip in the history of this town. If we do this, we do it for future generations." Steve Pullen countered that it is hard enough to get people to fill offices, and characterized the recall proposal as "undemocratic" and a "travesty."

The discussion continued back and forth. Roberta Weiss stated her opinion that a vote for this was a vote for divisiveness but Jonathan Levin countered that it's a problem if a board can't function because one person is not doing their job. Gary Shaw objected to the section of the article indicating that an official can be recalled after three months on the job or within three months of a recall election in which they were not removed. He said, "Every ninety days you get to take a whack at this person. I'm not against a recall article but I don't think you can get a chance to get rid of someone every ninety days." Cliff Weiss, who insisted he had the correct spelling of his last name, unlike Steve Weisz (a longtime joke between the two), said the recall process was a tool in the voter's toolbox that may or may not be used as a failsafe. Steve Weisz, after defending the spelling of his last name, concurred, saying "If I decide not to vote, to say "no" on everything, you should have a mechanism for getting rid of me." Bob Carlson expressed concern that the article seemed designed to get rid of a particular individual and given the small number of people present, it might make sense to come up with a more thoughtful solution with a better number of participants. David Brown agreed and made a motion to table the article and discuss it at a later time. The vote to table the article, which required a two-thirds majority, failed with a count of 24 to 61.

A final amendment to the article was proposed by Jeff Zimmerman, who suggested extending the period of time from election to office before an officer can be recalled from three months to six months. This passed with a voice vote. Doreen Beller proposed calling the question and this was approved by unanimous voice vote. The time had finally come to vote on Article 6. While a voice vote seemed pretty clear, Moderator Makuc called for a card vote for clarification. This resulted in passage of Article 6 with a count of 68 to 11. A motion to adjourn the meeting was met with enthusiastic approval.

The voting was done for the day, but the consequences of Articles 5 and 6 are still to be felt. There were strong feelings on both sides of the questions and it remains to be seen just how this town meeting will impact the people who work for the town as well as those who choose to serve on town boards and committees, not to mention the members of this community as a whole.

—Laurie Shaw

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In My View
Boycotting the Select Board

I am hereby notifying the Monterey Select Board (SB) that I am boycotting (my civil disobedience) any future SB meetings in which Steve Weisz is chair. My perspectives are many: his personal injection into the "police investigation," his continued oceans of prevarications to fellow SB members and the public, his failure to protect the integrity of the functioning of the SB as a group, his conducting SB business involving the Town Administrator's human resources issues by himself, behind the scenes, without any SB authority, his dominating discussions, allowing improper posts of SB meetings & agenda items to the public, violating the Open Meeting Law twice in the past and likely numerous times currently, and abuse of the position as the Chairman of the SB by continued bullying and badgering of Justin (select board member Makuc) on issues. Lastly, I also will not be participating in any meetings that allow open mics (which was my idea borrowed from Great Barrington) while the SB is deliberating. My perspective is that open mic has become a free for all opportunity for personal attacks of SB members, opportunities to bulldoze members to change their votes, bullying of SB members on issues, ad hominem attacks of members, allowing dunderheads who don't know any facts on the issue to speak, and allowing mob rule and control of the SB meetings by minority of the town residents. From my perspective the Chair and the TA and her followers are controlling the SB meetings, what topics are thoughtfully discussed, and the executive functioning of SB and its deliberations have been destroyed. We are not functioning as a board.

— John Weingold
Monterey Select Board

Editor's Note: The letter above was read into the record at the Wednesday, November 24 select board meeting.

Editor's Note: In My View *provides individual select board members an opportunity to communicate their thoughts about town affairs—reflections, opinions, and updates on topics of their choice.*

In My View
Rebuttal to John Weingold

Anyone who would write the statement "Boycotting the Select Board" has a fundamental misunderstanding of "Public Service."

Elected officials in Monterey are duty bound to serve the people of Monterey, not themselves.

Elected officials in Monterey are duty bound to serve the people of Monterey, whether they *like* the people they serve with or *dislike* the people they serve with.

Elected officials in Monterey are duty bound to serve the people of Monterey, whether they *agree* with the people they serve with or *disagree* with the people they serve with.

Elected officials in Monterey are duty bound to serve the people of Monterey, whether they *agree* with the policies of the town they serve, or *disagree* with the policies of the town they serve.

Elected officials in Monterey that refuse to work, "boycott" meetings and official duties, and deride public servants and the public, are **not** serving the people of Monterey and should be removed (when statutorily possible) or resign.

— Steven Weisz, Chair
Monterey Select Board

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Citizen Involvement?
In His Words

Mr. Weingold's message (left column) includes this statement:…"opportunity for…*ad hominem* attacks of (select board) members," but then proceeds to share his opinion of the interested citizens who were attending the select board meetings as "dunderheads who don't know any facts on the issue to speak, and allowing mob rule…"

Dunderhead:

"A dunce; blockhead; numbskull." —Dictionary.com

"A stupid person" —Merriam-Webster.com

Synonyms from M-W: cretin, dimwit, dumbhead, ignoramus, know-nothing, these among thirty or more, some even more disparaging.

Mob:

"1. A large and disorderly crowd of people especially one bent on riotous or destructive action." —Merriam-Webster

"1. A disorderly or riotous crowd of people.
2. A crowd bent on or engaged in lawless violence." —Dictionary.com

— Stephen Moore

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In My (re)View

A Few Good Men (1992 film) centers on the case of two marines court-martialed for hazing and killing another marine while carrying out an extrajudicial punishment known as a "code red." Defense attorney Lieutenant Kaffee aims to prove that the marines acted on orders from superior officers including Colonel Jessup. Jessup skirts around the truth for the majority of the film before he gets tired of Kaffee's pretentiousness, and passionately defends his decision to order the illegal "code red" on the basis that it ultimately saved lives and was for the good of the Marine Corps. Jessup's request that Kaffee respect him because he is "in the trenches" making life-or-death decisions has some validity, but it should not make Jessup immune from all criticism.

The rule of law is a necessary principle to prevent tyranny. In this case, the law is clear: a recent directive delivered to Jessup discouraged the use of "code reds." However, Jessup must also consider the welfare of his men and the objectives of the military, among other factors, in his decision making. Jessup acknowledges that he may appear "grotesque and incomprehensible" to outsiders like Kaffee who are unaware of his knowledge and responsibility, but Jessup's leadership position requires him to make those tough decisions which Kaffee might frown upon from behind his cushy desk in Washington. From his point of view, Jessup is out risking his life defending the very system Kaffee pretends to uphold.

But there are still standards. And Jessup's dishonesty and cover-up of his actions seem to have different motivations from his initial authorization of the "code red." He is letting his own marines get punished for following an order; where is the honor in that? Jessup may have selflessly ordered the "code red" for the good of the Marine Corps, but the cover-up was clearly directed at protecting his own reputation and potential promotion.

Should leaders like Jessup be granted some deference from critics like Kaffee who preach rules and order without having to face the day-to-day difficulties of war? Absolutely, but the same principle should not make Jessup immune from standards and accountability. Jessup should certainly be held accountable for his selfish and dishonorable behaviors which constitute egregious attacks on the rule of law. If you have any questions or comments, I'd like to hear from you. The best ways to reach me are justinmakuc@gmail.com and (413) 429-5854.

—Justin Makuc
Monterey Select Board

Getting the Monterey News

Pick up in several locations in town.
(See the list at the top of page 1.)

Have it mailed free of charge.

Receive it via email.

The *News* has been financed by voluntary contributions for over fifty years without a subscription.

Contact the *News* at MontereyNews9@gmail.com.

Contributions in November

Thanks to these two couples for their support in November. The *Monterey News* is a non-profit, and voluntary contributions are critical to keep the paper going. Thanks to everyone who reads the paper.

Peter and Linnea Grealish
Richard and Jeanne Schroeder

Skating Rink Setup Help

Volunteers are needed at the firehouse pavilion to help set up the ice rink on Saturday, December 4, at 9:30 a.m. No experience or skills needed. One hour gets the job done with enough hands helping. Bring a cordless drill if possible.

—Steve Graves

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Our White Pines

These trees have been called "the redwoods of the east" because they just keep on growing upwards. Look out at any wooded ridge or hill crest and you will see dark green giants reaching above the rest. This is not to say that we don't all "keep on growing" as long as we live, and maybe longer, it's just that we may not go right on up and up like the redwoods and the white pines.

Why do any of us go up? It's the sun. We are headed for the life-giving light and warmth of the sun. I go uphill to the top of our garden and orchard, the only real clearing we've got, and watch for the sparkle of live fire through the trees of the horizon, when the sun speaks to us all. This time of year the leaves are gone from the deciduous trees, letting through more sparkle than ever, and every day this first spark comes a bit farther to the right, a bit later by the clock. We once made a drawing of the horizon line and every morning put a mark where the sparkle popped up. This way we could tell when things turned around. We noted the spark time by the clock, too.

Our white pines are sun catchers, just like all of us. When Henry Thoreau was twenty-three years old in January of 1841, he wrote in his journal: "Every needle of the white pine trembles distinctly in the breeze, which on the sunny side gives the whole tree a shimmering seething aspect." To get this light show, you have to be closer to the tree, or take along your binoculars.

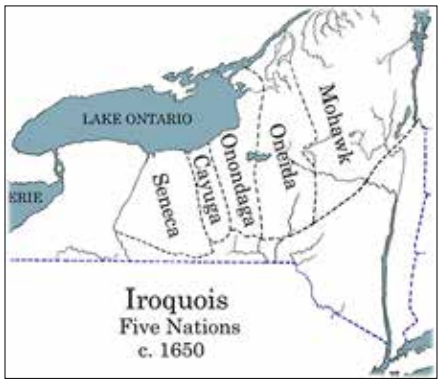
These needles or leaves are three to five inches long, slender, three-sided, and occur in bundles of five. They are flexible and blue-green. So writes Julia Ellen Rogers in her 1905 *The Tree Book*, which was later published by Doubleday as part of the ten-volume set called *The New Nature Library*. This came out in 1926 and my grandmother McAllester, who wrote nature articles for the newspaper in Boston, had it. So now I do, and in some of its venerable pages are the flattened leaves of the pertinent kinds of trees being described, leaves put there before I was born. I never met "Mothie," as she was called. She died suddenly the week I was born. But I have her books, and some leaves, and the family stories.

Seal of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy

We do have other sorts of pines in these parts, and they are splendid trees. Julia Ellen Rogers gives descriptions and photographs of them all in her book. But here is what she says about the white pine, *Pinus strobilus*.

"The soft white resinous wood is remarkably easy to work and was used in all kinds of construction, from masts to matches. Quick growing, symmetrical, and handsome in its early years; later it becomes more irregular, but full of character, and beautiful, in clean limbs and plume-like tufts of blue-green leaves. The tree is picturesque, even in decrepit age, towering in stately dignity over the heads of neighboring trees, adding distinction to all sylvan scenery. A white pine grown in the open has a broad crown that often keeps its lower branches, and these are borne to the ground by their own weight. Such a tree is a joy the whole year through to all tree lovers, including people and birds and squirrels."

White pines are a joy. They are also a symbol for the Haudenosaunee people, who call it the Tree of Peace. With its five needles and five-budded growth pattern, the pine resembles the coming together of the five nations of the Iroquois Federation: Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. These neighboring groups, in the Great Lakes region, were antagonistic, but they were brought together by the legendary peace-maker called Dekanoweidah. The chiefs of the five nations met under a white pine in the Onondaga territory, as did their successors over the generations, joined as one people or confederacy. Weapons were buried beneath the tree and can



be seen on the seal of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. In the center of the seal is the white pine, with an eagle at its top. All around the tree are birds, fish, mammals, amphibians, and in an outer ring are about fifty people, all holding hands at the outer edge of the seal. There are four main roots of the tree, around the buried weapons. There are the white roots of peace, reaching out in all four directions to other people to join in "good mind" and justice and peace.

Here are the words of John Muir, encouraging anyone who may feel uncertain about trees. Julia Ellen Rogers starts her first chapter, *How to Know the Trees* with this:

"And surely nobody can find anything hard in this; even the blind must enjoy these woods, drinking in their fragrance, listening to the music of the winds in their groves, and fingering their flowers and plumes and cones and richly furrowed boles. The kind of study required is as easy and natural as breathing."

—Bonner McAllester

Letters
The People Yes

Author's Note: The title of the column is taken from Carl Sandburg's epic poem praising the perseverance of the American people.

The townspeople of Monterey voted resoundingly for a recall by-law. I was hoping that this might have an unanticipated but welcome outcome—to lower the temperature of the raucous discourse, return to civility, and begin working together again. Those hopes were dashed by John Weingold, who cranked up the heat by notifying the other two select board members that he is boycotting any future select board meetings in which Steve Weisz is its chair. Select board members are elected to represent the constituents of their town. That demands that they set their personal opinions and biases aside and work in good faith for the benefit of the town and the townspeople. To do otherwise, is a dereliction of the duties of the office to which they were elected.

We will face tough times in Monterey if the remaining two select board members do not see eye-to-eye on issues that are vital for our town. And should one of the remaining two select board members be unable to perform his duties, it would be difficult to imagine how the town could function effectively, democratically, or even legally, with only one board member.

Now is the time to contact our local representatives—State Senator Adam Hinds and Representative William (Smitty) Pignatteli (see their contacts below)—to encourage them to help expedite the legislature's approval of our recall by-law. They need to hear from us, the townspeople, regarding the urgency of our situation.

—Hillel M Maximon

Senator Adam Hinds: adam.hinds@masenate.gov; or 24 Beacon St., Room 109E, Boston, MA, 02133; or call (617) 722-1625.

Representative Pignatelli: rep.smitty@mahouse.gov; or 24 Beacon St., Room 473F, Boston, MA, 02133; or call (617) 722-2210.

Letters
Push for the Recall Act

68 to 11! That was the overwhelming vote at our recent town meeting in support of making the remedy of recall elections available to the voters of Monterey. This is important because without that remedy we would be unable to protect the town from elected officials who were seriously neglecting their official duties or had otherwise proven themselves demonstrably unfit to hold public office.

Unfortunately, we now are confronted by a crisis in the town's executive body that can only be remedied by resignation or a recall election. The primary cause of our crisis is one member of the select board: John Weingold. From the beginning of his term, about a year and a half ago, he has failed to carry out statutorily imposed functions of his office. He has persistently neglected his official duties and otherwise shown himself to be unfit to serve as selectman.

One of the most basic duties of a selectman is the careful review and approval of the bi-weekly warrants allowing payment of Monterey's bills and salaries. In FY21, out of 59 vendor warrants, John signed 9; and out of 27 payroll warrants, John signed 2. In FY22 (beginning July 1, 2021), as of November 15, 2021, out of 17 vendor warrants, John signed 3; and out of 8 payroll warrants, John signed 0.

Another basic duty is the editing and approval of the select board meeting minutes. Although from time to time John claims that draft minutes are inaccurate, he refuses to describe the supposed inaccuracies or to even vote on whether the minutes should be adopted. As the Open Meeting Law expressly mandates, accurate minutes play a critical role in keeping the public informed about what its government is doing. His failure is a blatant dereliction of one of his critical duties.

We cannot function without town meetings. The mechanism for calling those meetings is the town meeting warrant. John has refused to sign warrants calling town meetings. Moreover, he has failed without excuse or explanation to even attend some town meetings, contrary to a selectman's duty to inform the voters.

As the town's executive, the select board does its work at public meetings. Obviously, attendance at those meetings is crucial to achieving the town's goals. Nevertheless, since taking office John has failed to show up at over 18 meetings. That's almost a third of the total. In no instance has he explained his absence or even given the other members notice that he would not be attending. And on a number of occasions, he left meetings long before all the business had been addressed. During the meetings he attends, John has treated the other members with hostility often laced with angry and contemptuous remarks. He often adds to his insults by asserting without any basis that criminal activity is afoot.

Another critical responsibility of the select board is preparation of the town budget. In his first year in office, John completely refused to participate in the process. Soon work will begin on the FY23 budget. Since John has publicly asserted that the select board has no role to play in developing the town budget, we can assume that he won't participate this year either.

Instead of doing his job, John has spent his time filing endless and with two minor exceptions, frivolous Open Meeting Law complaints against other select board members. Twice he filed frivolous complaints against select board members with the MA State Ethics Commission, which promptly rejected them. And he topped all that off with the filing of a libelous and frivolous superior court complaint against other officials and the Town of Monterey itself, seeking among other things over $300,000 in damages. The superior court dismissed the complaint and John, an attorney, received an official warning from the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers about filing frivolous and therefore unethical litigation.

Letters

The *Monterey News* welcomes letters on a wide range of topics. Commentary on events and town affairs, notes of appreciation, or alerts for upcoming activities that might be of interest to Monterey readers.

Submit your letters to MontereyNews9@gmail.com, or mail them to PO Box 9, Monterey, MA 01245. Please include your full name and contact information.

From the day he took office, John has treated the town administrator most disagreeably, refusing to even meet with her and often insulting her at select board meetings. Although he is one-third of our executive, he has, with perhaps one exception, shown no interest in meeting with other key town employees to learn the specifics of their jobs and the problems they face in performing those jobs.

Nor should we forget that on at least two occasions, John voted against matters of critical interest to the residents of Monterey. First, he voted against our applying for the $1.8 million grant to replace the sixty-year-old steel culvert in the center of town. The new culvert is needed flood protection for, among other places, town hall, the post office, the general store, and our brand new library. Second, he voted against the $1.1 million grant to Fiber Connect for the extension of broadband to the remaining 40% of our population who still need speedy internet service.

To resolve our crisis, we need the ability to recall John Weingold sooner rather than later. Because our proposed recall election bylaw regulates elections, the legislature needs to pass a special act approving our decision. Therefore we need the support of our state representatives, Senator Adam Hinds and Representative Smitty Pignatelli. But—and this is critical—we need to persuade them most politely that legislative action should occur as quickly as possible. So I urge everyone to contact them today (contacts on page 12). The staffs of our representatives have said that the most effective means of contact are telephone calls.

But waiting for legislative approval is no longer a sufficient remedy for the crisis confronting Monterey. Much faster action is required because John Weingold has intensified his war on our government and now extended it to the people he was elected to serve.

On November 17, Mr. Weingold sent an email to the other select board members stating that he would no longer attend any meetings as long as Steven Weisz was chair. He actually intends to avoid all the duties of the office he holds while keeping his $5,000 salary. Those decisions are truly outrageous and utterly irresponsible.

The honorable course for Mr. Weingold is to resign immediately. If that doesn't happen, the people have a right to demand it. He can then be replaced in a special election.

—Don Coburn
Former chair, Monterey Select Board

Keeping the Library Shining

If you've been to the transfer station, you have met Beth Gilmore. She has made the transfer station a destination. What most of you don't know is that for twenty-six years she has also done another job for the town. In fact, she was cleaning the library years before she took on the Swap Shack.

Whether it was the regular routine or the deep spring cleaning, she kept the library clean. Library book shelves attract dust. Beth became an expert at dealing with that, without us even knowing how much work it was.

We will miss her reliable and thorough job. We wish her and Dave a happy retirement. Thank you, Beth!

But now the library is in need of a cleaner:

Looking for a cleaner/cleaning service for the Monterey Library, 452 Main Road. 3,700 square feet, including book shelves, public tables and seating, office space, and two individual restrooms. Liability insurance, Workmen's Comp, references required. Please email montereylibrary@gmail.com for an appointment to meet and view the job.

Finally a reminder that the library will be closed during the holiday season on Friday, December 24 and 25; and Friday, December 31 and Saturday, January 1.

—Mark Makuc

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Here's a Thought...
We've Lost Our National Marbles

I'm finishing this at three in the morning after a night when the news (I hope the most recent news of its kind, at the time you read this) has been full of the people murdered and injured by an SUV driver who apparently plowed into a crowd at a pre-Christmas parade in Wisconsin. It's not an isolated instance. Remember the similar attack four years ago in Charlottesville? Remember the more recent it-was-just-a-joke defense in the House of Representatives, with the joke repeated, and condoned, after censure? Aware of how many people will get riled at the idea I'm comparing that last with the first two?

We've lost our national marbles. That could be a good thing. After all, it's time we stopped playing games like marbles, where the point is to win them all, pick them up, and go home. Or mow people down, for whatever personal or collective motivation. I suspect that the day after Thanksgiving this year will be—will have been—a blacker-than-usual Friday. How many funerals will be held? How many lives shattered, even when the injured people survived?

I've lost my marbles, too. I keep hoping last night's reports were wrong, or at least that I'll be witness to another news flash. I want to hear that the driver of the SUV had had a cerebral stroke or a physical heart attack, not this stroke of hatred. Not this spiritual myocardial infarction. Those are as contagious as they are lethal.

This is the December issue of the *Monterey News*, published at the time of year our culture usually focuses on children. How many of those hit by that SUV driver were children? I don't really want to know, but that will be all too apparent by morning. I'm aiming for zero. And what a low bar: I hope none of the dead and injured are children.

As I once read, When you're a child, Christmas is all about you, but when you're an adult, Christmas is all about others. I don't remember whose quote it is, but its message of growing into the art of giving pertains whether your December Feast of Lights is Christmas, Hanukkah, or winter solstice. It pertains whether your December 26 is Kwaanza or Boxing Day. Who, or what, infected the SUV driver with such devastating spiritual malfunction? He (I assume "he") may have driven the SUV alone, but who, or what, drove him to it?

It's after 8:30 in the morning now. The morning news stated that the driver was fleeing from another scene, so maybe there's no one backstage quietly celebrating the carnage, as happened after Charlottesville. But this tragedy is more than an isolated instance of panic during pursuit. Acts of violence and their threat have become our public way of life. We've lost our national marbles. What are we going to tell the children?

—Mary Kate Jordan

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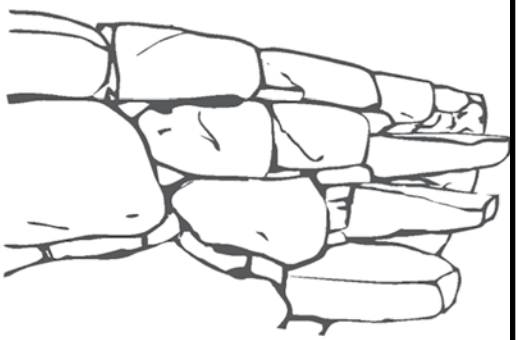

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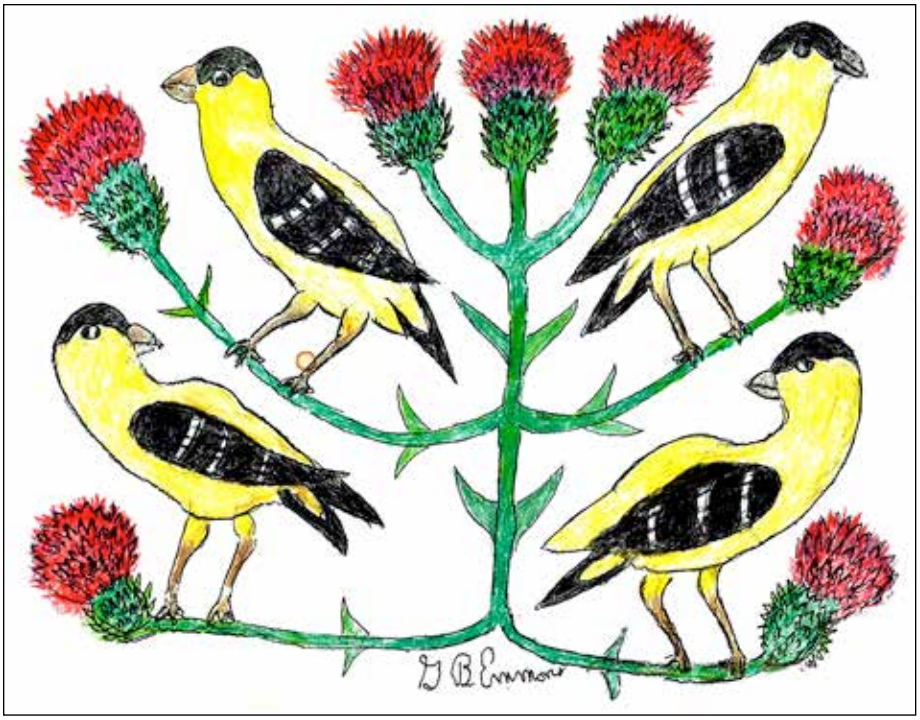
The American Goldfinch

The American goldfinch may well be the most eyecatching visitor to our backyards because its gold shiny body is outlined and framed by black wings, forked tail, and black hat on its head. Trying to identify other species of less colorful finches is more difficult because of a furtive and flitting motion from limb to limb in trees, constantly shifting position. The gathering of goldfinches (as in my illustration) is called a "charm" from compilations of collective nouns dating back to the late middle ages, just as they labeled a flock of Canada geese a "gander," or a group of hawks a "kettle." I have drawn goldfinches perched on a thorny Scottish thistle bush. They prefer the nutritious thistle seeds that they can crack open with their powerful conical-shaped bill.

Various species of finches today are classified as belonging to the family of Fringillidae. This family includes the common house and purple finches, the evening and pine grosbeaks, crossbills, canaries, and redpolls. Many of these birds are kept as caged pet birds, and some are said to communicate vocally with their keepers. The brown-colored house finch is very musical and sings any time of the year with a throaty warble when perched or in flight. The goldfinch is also an aerial musician in flight, and sounds like a whistling warbler, its notes ending with a per-chick-oree, punctuating a final bound into the air. For their variety of vocal performance, the sounds of finches are uplifting for the choral atmosphere of your neighborhood.

While finches are treasured residents even in crowded suburbs, they cannot be taken for granted, because global warming is constantly shifting the North American population northward towards Canada. When forced to relocate from their familiar habitats, they often bump into unfamiliar glass windows, or are eaten by roaming house cats. Today American bird conservation organizations' efforts are overwhelmed with effectively preventing one or both of these hazards of relocation. Moving to a new habitat may also be unhealthy due to spraying of pesticides and herbicides along wooded road sides, thistle patches, orchards, and of course, flower and vegetable gardens, which previously may have looked healthy to move into.



Climate change is notoriously long lasting, and a disturbing hazard for finches all over the world. For our local finches, the revising parameters of their seasonal migration may result in the coming winter being followed by a silent spring, forewarned in Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, which urged us to stop the use of deadly DDT along with other pesticides.

Springtime arrives as our planet circles the sun with the Earth's tilting axis ushering in the vernal equinox. The spring sounds of the songbirds have, since the beginning of time, brought the anticipated background melodies down from above. To silence this heavenly chorus will be ominous to the birds, the bird watchers, and to you as reader of the *Monterey News*.

—George B. Emmons

Solstice Shadows

As we rush to the winter solstice on the morning of Tuesday, December 21, the lengthening shadows from the low sun creep across the landscape making for some dramatic images.

Take your phones and cameras with you when you go outside and capture some images. Send them to montereynews9@gmail.com before the solstice passes for inclusion in a photo essay.

—Stephen Moore

Monterey News January Issue

Likely to be a bit late...

As usual, the holidays and the calendar are likely to delay the publishing of the January issue until the middle of the first week. However, feel free to obsessively ask Dave Gilmore, in his last month at the transfer station, if the paper is in.

Weather report

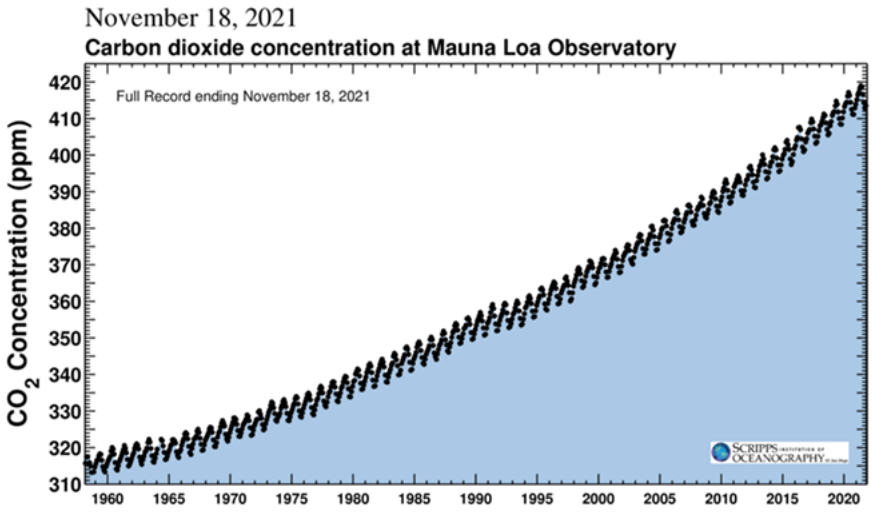
"This is probably the most important data set you'll ever see in your life," my biology teacher observed one afternoon in a graduate course on interpreting data.

The slide he projected showed a zigzag line moving upward across the horizontal axis.

The line traced the carbon dioxide readings at the Mauna Lua Observatory in Hawaii beginning in 1958.

The zigs and zags, of what is known as Keeling Curve, for the scientist who collected the data, are essentially the traces of the Earth breathing. Beginning in May or so, when the plants in the Northern Hemisphere (where the data was recorded) come back to life, the biosphere breathes in carbon dioxide, or CO2, which is incorporated into biomass, and breathes out oxygen. In late fall, as photosynthesis subsides, the opposite occurs.

I first saw the data in the late 1990s, a time when serious policies coupled with carbon pricing could have changed the trajectory with relatively little disruption to the economy. An increasingly steep upward rise of atmospheric carbon dioxide, a primary greenhouse gas, has continued unabated since then. At that time, the CO2 levels had already passed 350 parts per million, which is considered a safe level in the atmosphere. The impacts of climate change were less obvious than they are now. But the Keeling Curve has continued its upward acceleration, way beyond 350 to now over 415 parts per million. The consequences, already tragic, will become catastrophic.



Scripps CO2 program grants unrestricted usage of the figures on this website provided credit is given to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Even here in the Northeast, where climate change impacts are less severe than in most places, it's hard to ignore how rapidly one of the most basic aspects of our lives is changing. This fall we had the latest frost in at least fifty years—maybe in history, according to the *Berkshire Edge*. The growing season is now about ten days longer here than it was in 1950. But many of my tomatoes failed anyway because of the wettest summer in years, an effect related to increased evaporation from the warmer temperatures.

The county has seen a gradual rise in rainfall over the last seventy years, rising from 40.1 inches in the 1960s to 48.6 inches in the 2000s. An additional 3.55 inches are predicted by the 2050s. Nick Diller of the *Berkshire Edge* recently reported the warmest October in his fifty-seven years of weather record keeping and the seventh month this year with above average preceptitation. He tallied more than 53 inches of precipitation so far in 2021, about 6 inches more than all of 2020.

The federally funded Monterey Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (2020) catalogues some of the other local changes: Average temperatures in the Berkshires are up 1.7 degrees since 1960, 2.8 degrees since 1895. The number of strong storms has increased by 72 percent since 1958. More rain-on-snow events are raising the risk of more winter floods. More ice storms mean more power outages and lost trees.

The county has seen a sharp increase in number of events with more than 2 inches of precipitation in a day. But warmer temperatures have decreased snowpacks, resulting in altered water regimes and soil moisture. The loss of snow insulation increases the risk of frozen pipes and drains.

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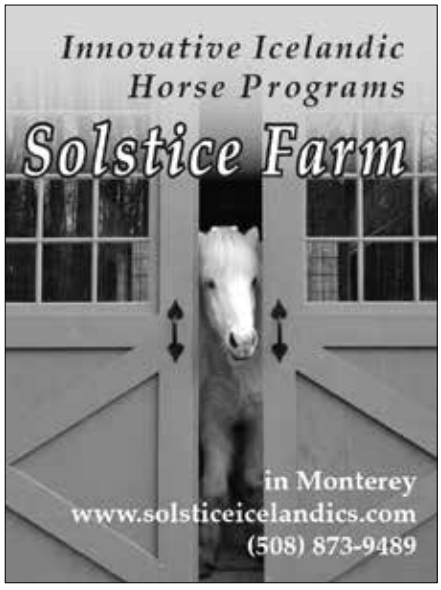

I used to like storms—but now they are often too freakish to fully enjoy. Every year the weather nomenclature expands to fit the new weather anomalies. Nor'easters, as fierce as they can be, have a familiar, traditional ring to them. Some of the newer terms are downright scary.

A few years ago, we were introduced to the bomb cyclone, or winter hurricane, and the polar vortexes that push brutally cold air southward and keep it here. I can't recall the first reference I heard to Atlantic clippers. Maybe it was around the time I learned about microbursts – small-scale tornados. Last year firenadoes and mega-fires devastated drought-stricken parts of the country. Last spring, I did a double take on a headline that read, "Midwest derecho devastates Iowa corn crop." A derecho, as I learned from the dictionary is "a long-lived, straight-line wind storm that is associated with a fast-moving group of severe thunderstorms known as a mesoscale convective system and potentially rivaling hurricanic and tornadic forces."

It took us a long time to get to where we are now—ice core samples show CO2 levels steadily rising since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the mid-nineteenth century. And by not heeding the warnings of our Cassandra-like scientists, we've pretty much blown it, and will have to reap the consequences. But given the rapidity of the changes that are occurring all around us, it behooves us to do everything we can to stop adding to the problem and to build resilience. In a fascinating novel I read recently, *Ministry for the Future*, Kim Stanley Robinson offers a semi-hopeful futuristic vision of how humanity eventually reverses the climate juggernaut, using known technologies, but not before suffering intolerable losses. One point from the book seemed clear: getting out of this alive will take efforts from every direction and sector.

And several local efforts are taking on climate change and its ramifications. Peter Murkett has started a group to explore greater use of renewables, especially solar panels, around town. The new Monterey Renewable Energy Working Group, which is still recruiting members, has been tasked with researching the potential for renewable energy projects in all aspects and reporting back to the select board.

According to Dennis Lynch, who wrote these grants, Monterey has been awarded grants though the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program to assess local risks of climate change and improve resiliency—such as the rebuilding of the culvert on Route 23 over the Konkapot River near town hall to help manage the movement of water and control flooding in ways that will protect lives, public safety, and infrastructure. Additional grant funds will be needed from the state before the start of construction. Another grant, which the town received this fall through the state will be used during 2022 to reduce the quantities of pollutants entering Lake Garfield during stormwater events.

If you are a steward of woodlands, planting trees and maintaining healthy forests can do a lot to sequester excess carbon in biomass, rather than in the atmosphere. And nurturing native plants is one way to build more sustainable and resilient landscapes.

As Peter Murkett wrote in this paper last month, "Life is a mess, but the hard work of cleaning up a human mess has its satisfactions. In any case, it never ends."

—Janet Jensen

Movie Night, December 14

Movie night this month is on Tuesday, December 14, at the library, at 7 p.m. The movie is *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, an animated film, adapted from the classic story by Roald Dahl with a stellar cast including George Clooney, Meryl Streep, Bill Murray, and Owen Wilson. The story: an urban fox cannot resist reverting to his wild animal nature, raiding the farms of three prominent farmers, causing a retaliation against the entire animal population. The fox must find a way to save his community, while mending the relationship with his family and coming to terms with his own mortality. A kid's movie, a grownup movie? You decide...

—Kyle Pierce

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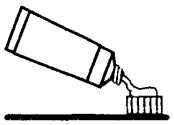
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December at the Knox Gallery

After what seemed a very long break in tradition, we are excited to once again present our traditional community group show for the holiday season. *Tracks & Trails* will open on Friday, December 10. We are fortunate to have many talented, dedicated, and generous local artists and friends, who have used the suggested theme to select a piece that imparts their unique visual response or to use as inspiration for an exciting new work. The exhibit will feature diverse and stimulating pieces in a range of mediums (both two- and three-dimensional) that reflect our community. We look forward to having you all see the varied interpretations—both literal and metaphorical.

Please consider including artwork for your holiday shopping. Shop local and support artists! And just a reminder… we request that the artist make a donation of 25% of sales to the Friends of the Library, so every sale should support both local artists and the library.

Tracks & Trails will run through January 22, 2022. Due to Covid and library regulations there will not be a reception.

Participants in the *Tracks & Trails* include: Joe Baker, Maureen Banner, Christine Chrisinat, Midori Curtis, Ruth Fingerman, Patricia Hogan, Samuel Hurst, Nancy Johnson, Bonner McAllester, Michele Miller, Ellen Murtagh, Pauline Nault, Marylin Orner, and Julie Shapiro.

All Knox Gallery events are admission free. Exhibits can be viewed during library hours (see back page of this issue). Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA,; MontereyMassLibrary.org/Knox-Gallery; Facebook.com/KnoxGallery.

—MaryPaul Yates

Tracks & Trails *features the work of many of our local artists including Midori Curtis.*

Letters

Thank you

As most of you know, about six weeks ago I fell at the transfer station and broke both leg bones just above my ankle. As a result I will be out of work for an extended period of time. Dave tells me weekly that if he could bottle up all the messages of "get well soon," "we miss you," and "if there is anything we can do," I would be floating around my house on them. I thank you all!

Talking about a great big thank you—because of my injury, this is my first opportunity since it happened to say thank you to all who helped to make my marriage ceremony to Dave so memorable and one of the happiest days of my life.

—Beth (Parks) Gilmore

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Remembrance

Marie Heath, 88

Marie Anne Heath, formerly of Monterey, died Monday, November 1, 2021 at Geer Nursing Home in Canaan, CT. Marie was born on December 11, 1932 in Bronx, NY, daughter to William and Anna (Royce) Ward. She was a graduate of the former Roe Jan High School class of 1951. Marie worked for many years as a school bus aide and as a home health aide. She was a member of the Immaculate Conception Church in Mill River and a member of their choir, and also a member of the Hill and Dale Singers. She loved doing arts and crafts, playing musical instruments, and animals. Marie's husband Ernest F. Heath, whom she married on May 3,1952 at Saint Bridget's in Copake, predeceased her in 1997. Marie is survived by three daughters; Dolores Leffingwell of Canaan, CT, Susan Heath and partner Kurt Alexander of East Otis, and Mary Theresa Stalker and husband Dustin of Sheffield. Marie had seven grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. In addition to her husband Ernest Heath, Marie was predeceased by daughter, Irene Marie Heath, four sisters, Marguerite Tighe, Catherine Weber, Anne Dawson, and Irene Magnus, and one brother, Francis Ward.

Graveside services for Marie Heath were held on November 12 at Corashire Cemetery in Monterey with Deacon Sean Mulholland officiating. Condolences may be made through birchesroyfuneralservices.com.

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Bidwell House Museum

As we get ready to say good-bye to 2021, the staff and board of directors of the Bidwell House Museum want to express a heartfelt thanks to our neighbors in Monterey for being such wonderful friends during these challenging two years. In 2021 you became members in record numbers for the museum; you enthusiastically participated in programs like the reenactment weekend in September; you made appointments to take our guided house tour and marveled at all you learned; you spent time hiking the trails and enjoying the gardens; you volunteered your time to help clean up the grounds; you sent in donations with notes of support; and you shared more kind words than I can count when I spoke with many of you at the museum and at our events. We are so lucky to reside in this beautiful place and share the amazing history of this town and region and we could not do that without your support and compassion.

As seasonal house tours come to an end, a winter quiet has settled over the museum. But inside, the staff and the board are hard at work planning for winter Zoom lectures and 2022 programs. In order to continue that work throughout the winter, we need your help! Our annual appeal campaign letter, with an update on the museum and images from the year, has been mailed and we ask you to please consider donating to this end-of-the-year fundraising campaign. The donations from this campaign allow us to keep sharing our trails, the Bidwell story, and history education with the community.

In tandem with our annual appeal we are also in the midst of preparing our second annual online fundraising auction, "Twelve Days of Bidwell Bidding." Running from December 1 through 12, and filled with a wonderful assortment of gifts, experiences, and museum programs you can bid on, this auction will also help the museum get through the winter and into our fun-filled 2022 season. There are interesting items for young and old, gift certificates to local businesses, gift memberships, and options to donate to a variety of museum programs. To donate to our annual appeal or to view the auction, go to our website, bidwellhousemuseum.org, and click on the "Annual Appeal and Auction" links found there.

As always, don't forget that the museum gardens and trails are open year round for hiking, walking your dog, or even snowshoeing and cross country skiing. And don't miss our new Loom Brook Trail! Updated trail maps can be found on the front porch and in the parking kiosk. Winter is a wonderful time to experience the beautiful Bidwell property.

—Heather Kowalski
Executive Director

Remembrance

Rita Schwartz

Rita Raquel Attia Schwartz, of Chevy Chase, MD, and Longmeadow, MA, passed away on Tuesday, November 2. Rita was born in Kobe, Japan and raised in Colon, Panama. She was the beloved wife of Steven Schwartz and devoted mother of Sonya Schwartz (Don Fishman) and Marc Schwartz (Joyce Chan), and loving sister of Farida Attia (Jay Pomerantz). She was the cherished grandmother of Harry and Sam Fishman and Andre and Zenya Schwartz. She was the great aunt of Sofia and Leo Cohen, and Andrew and Sarah Klopfer, and sister-in-law of Rickie Klopfer (Ed Klopfer). Rita studied comparative literature and taught English and Spanish as a second language. A memorial service was held on November 4 at Temple Sinai in Washington, DC. Memorial contributions may be made to DC Central Kitchen, a Wider Circle, or Latin American Youth Center. Arrangements entrusted to Torchinsky Hebrew Funeral Home.

Public Document Requests

As many people are now aware, this year has seen many complaints filed by many folks associated with town government. To help resolve this web of complaints, the town voted $10,000 to hire a firm to investigate the actions behind the complaints and potentially give some guidance for their resolution.

A new element of this friction emerged during a discussion at the November 10 select board meeting. There was a lengthy and very difficult discussion concerning two public document requests (PDR) made by select board member John Weingold of Steven Weisz, chair of the select board, and of Melissa Noe, town administrator. Noe, who then was the only records access officer (RAO), was asking permission of the board to contact town counsel for guidance in how to respond as Weingold is one of her supervisors.

Select board member Justin Makuc felt that as RAO, Noe had the authority to decide how to respond to these requests, just as she'd done for two previous public document requests in mid-September. One was made by Terry Walker, town clerk, and a second made anonymously, which is permitted under state law. Makuc kept saying that these requests should be dealt with in a "consistent manner," so she should make the decisions the RAO is empowered to make. Should the requesters be dissatisfied, they can appeal to the state's Supervisor of Public Records. (See the article on public document requests law on page 22.) The actual handling of the September PDRs was not clear.

The discussion was rather heated, and never reached the point of one of the two select board members present (member John Weingold had left the meeting earlier) making a motion. The situation was resolved when attorney Jon Levin, the chair of the Board of Appeals, suggested that the board appoint him as a second RAO, and he would respond to these four PDRs and one additional one. With the board's approval, the tension in the room dissipated.

As these public document requests seem to strike at the very heart of some of the current difficulties, I made a request from RAO Levin for the text of the four PDRs referred to in the meeting.

The actual texts of the requests range from one to four pages long, so I have attempted to provide summary information. I am trying to present a sense of these documents only. However, as these are public documents, I can send the requests' text to anyone who asks. (montereynews9@gmail.com)

The Requests

September 13: An anonymous request was received by RAO Noe for documents **from** Terry Walker, town clerk. This request sought printed copies of any emails and texts from January 1 to September 13 for communications from the clerk to John Weingold and eleven other named individuals, including two town officials, and "anyone else," which addressed a list of ten topics. Four topics included town highway department, fire department and company, and town business. Three topics listed personnel concerns, and two topics focused on grant programs.

September 14: On this date town administrator Noe made a request of materials sent **from** the clerk. This request asked for printed copies of any emails and text messages from July 21 to September 14 sent by the clerk to John Weingold and twelve others, including two town officials, police department members, and "anyone else," concerning a complaint filed by the clerk against Noe and then-director of operations Shawn Tyron.

November 1: On this date RAO Noe received a PDR from select board member John Weingold.

This request is for materials sent **from** Steven Weisz. There are thirty-one items, in the forms of emails, texts, print documents, and phone records for

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communications from Weisz to others. There are twenty named individuals, eight of whom are town employees or officials.

The stated list of concerns included, in no specific order in this report:

Fifteen specific requests concerned the October 4 select board meeting at which Weingold and Makuc voted in executive session to put TA Noe on administrative leave, and the October 6 meeting when Makuc and Weisz voted to rescind the administrative leave.

Five requests referred to legal advice received by Weisz or others.

Five requests concerned the TA administrative leave apart from the October 4 and October 6 meetings.

Two requests concerned filed personnel complaints.

Additional subjects were the recall citizens petition, personnel conflicts, and select board meeting postings.

Most of the request items were specific to varying degrees, but four items had subjects that were either very broad or not stated.

Most of the requested items had clearly stated time periods, but in five items the time period was either very broad or not stated.

November 1: On this date RAO Noe received a second PDR from John Weingold for materials sent **from** Noe. This request has a list of sixty-two items.

The stated list of concerns included, in no specific order in this report:

- Recent select board meetings;
- Town administrator's administrative leave;
- An event on July 21;
- Personnel complaints;
- Certain political activity;
- Hiring decision documents for three positions;
- "Any town business;"
- Grant writing activities;
- Requests for public documents;
- and specific professional certifications.

Many of the requested items follow either of these formats:

"All emails/texts between (first date) and (second date) concerning (topic, with varying degrees of specificity)."

"All documents of/by (named individual) for the (topic) purpose."

This request included twenty named individuals or organizations, including ten town employees, officials, or town offices.

In addition there were seven separately listed topics including:

- Documents and meta-data for five listed grants and grant writing;
- and two specific items for all communications concerning fire department/company, and highway department, with no stated time period.

Many of these items are quite specific, and some are quite broad, including a request for "Copies of all reports as TA submitted to the Monterey SB," with no stated time period.

Several have overlapping requests, e.g. "any town employee," and a named employee.

At the Wednesday, November 24 select board meeting RAO Jon Levin reported that he had contacted the MA Supervisor of Records concerning the Weingold requests. The supervisor allowed an extended compliance time given the scope of the requests, and authorized the town to charge for the compiling time and printing costs. Levin estimates that there might be as much as forty hours of work required, at a state permitted rate of $25/hr. Mr. Weingold has been given this estimate and had not yet responded.

Levin also recommended that a part-time employee be hired, or that RAO Noe's time be limited to four hours per week to minimize impact on her work time as town administrator. The select board decided to wait for Mr. Weingold's agreement on costs, and then proceed with Ms. Noe spending the limited time each week.

Levin also reported on efforts to satisfy the two September PDRs for information from town clerk Terry Walker, but has had some difficulty in gaining her compliance at this point.

— Stephen Moore

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Public Document Requests
MA Public Records Law

"Every government record in Massachusetts is presumed to be public unless it may be withheld under a specifically stated exemption." —From the cover letter by Secretary of the Commonwealth William Gavin, for *A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law*, updated March 2020.

Caution: What follows is a brief, selective overview of the state's public records law. I asked a person very knowledgable about the law to review this summary and was advised that the brevity "might invite more misunderstanding than understanding."

So, to be very clear, the purpose of this summary is to provide some context for the recent spate of public records requests that have been made in Monterey (see preceeding pages), and not to provide any great depth into the law. If you have an interest in this area, please refer to the state's guide.

The guide can be read and downloaded from the state website, mass.gov. Search for "A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law," or just "public records law." Or contact me at montereynews9@gmail.com and I will be happy to send you the electronic version of the guide.

Quoted texts below are from the *Guide*. (I have deleted footnotes that refer to actual statues which are included in the back of the *Guide*.)

It should be noted that managing public document requests is an administrative task and is not the business of the elected executive, which in Monterey is the select board.

Citizens Rights

"The Massachusetts Public Records Law and its Regulations provide that each person has a right of access to public information. This right of access includes the right to inspect, copy or have a copy of records provided upon the payment of a reasonable fee, if any."

What is a Document

"The Public Records Law broadly defines 'public records' to include 'all books, papers, maps, photographs, recorded tapes, financial statements, statistical tabulations, or other documentary materials or data, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any officer or employee" of any Massachusetts governmental entity.'

The Request

The request is made to a governmental body. Monterey has an appointed records access officer (RAO). Currently, our RAO is our town administrator, Melissa Noe. Jon Levin was recently appointed as a second RAO to respond to certain recent requests. (See page 20-21.)

"There are no strict rules that govern the manner in which requests for public information should be made. Requests may be made in person or in writing. Written requests may be submitted in person, by mail, facsimile or email. A requestor must provide the RAO with a reasonable description of the desired information."

"The requestor is not required to provide any reason for making a request and, generally, the purpose of the request has no bearing on the public status of the record. All requestors must be treated the same with respect to the response to their requests. Given this, the requestor may not be required to identify himself or herself."

Response to Requests

"If the RAO intends to produce records and is able to do so within 10 business days, it must 'at reasonable times and without unreasonable delay' permit inspection or furnish a copy of any public record not later than 10 business days following the receipt of the request."

What follows this statement are specific guidelines for what are qualifying records, other time requirements with regards to providing a response, and the necessary elements of a response.

The RAO can, within its discretion, deny portions or the whole of a request.

"A denial must detail the specific basis for withholding the requested materials. The denial must include a citation to one of the statutory or common law exemptions upon which the records custodian relies, and must explain with specificity why the exemption applies."

"A denial must also advise the requestor of the right to seek redress through the administrative process provided by the Supervisor of Records as well as the judicial remedy available in superior court."

Fees

"A records custodian may charge a reasonable fee to recover the costs of complying with a public records request. However, it is important to note that a fee for a public record may not be charged unless the RAO responded to the requestor within 10 business days."

The guide provides rules for how to calculate fees for any necessary preparation of documents. Preparation can include "time used to review records to determine what portions are subject to redaction or withholding."

Remedies for Requestors

"If a records custodian denies access to, or cannot produce requested records in 10 business days, a records custodian is required by statute to inform the requestor of the right of appeal to the Supervisor of Public Records."

"A requestor who is denied access to any requested information may petition the >

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Supervisor for an appeal of the response, or lack thereof, within 90 days."

Exemptions

There are twenty-two defined statutory exemptions that form the basis for denial of public records.

"There are strictly and narrowly construed exemptions and common law privileges to the broad definition of "public records."

"The statutory definition of 'public records' contains exemptions providing the basis for withholding records completely or in part. Where exempt information is intertwined with non-exempt information, the non-exempt portions are subject to disclosure once the exempt portions are deleted."

The balance of the guide deals with records management: retention, electronic records storage, and general maintenance and storage of public records. There is an appendix that quotes in full the Massachusetts public records laws.

Feel free to contact montereynews9@gmail.com for an electronic copy.

—Stephen Moore

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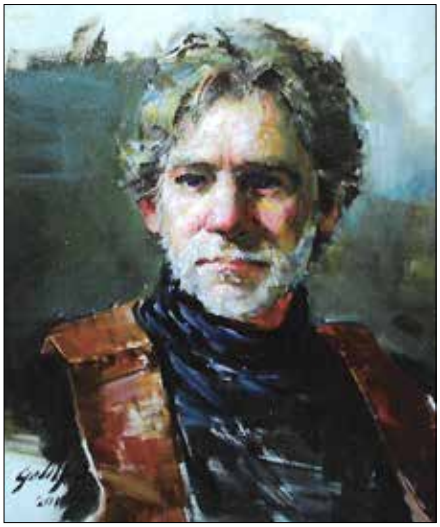
Remembrance

Ron Goldfinger, 75

Dr. Ronald Edward Goldfinger, 75, of Marblehead, MA, and formerly of Monterey, MA and New York City, passed away on October 4, 2021 after a hard-fought battle with pancreatic cancer. Dr. Goldfinger was the beloved husband of Christine (Brunoski) Goldfinger, with whom he shared over forty-six years of marriage.

He was the devoted and loving father of Samantha Abdulla and her husband Anthony of Boxford and Lauren Goldfinger of Marblehead; the cherished grandfather of Zoe Abdulla; the dear brother of Carole Silver and her husband Jerry of Middletown, New York; and the adored uncle of Brian and Matt Silver and Scott Sigman, all of New York. He is also survived by many helpful, loving, and amazing friends.

Ron was born in the Bronx on May 25, 1946, the son of the late Samuel and Leona (Cohen) Goldfinger. He was a graduate of the prestigious High School of Music & Art in the Bronx with the class of 1964. He earned his bachelor's degree in art and biology at Harpur College, Binghamton, NY, graduating magna cum laude. He earned his medical degree from SUNY Downstate Medical in Brooklyn, graduating with honors. He practiced internal medicine for over forty-six years, first in New York and then at Pittsfield Medical Associates.



Ron Goldfinger, self-portrait

Despite all those years practicing medicine, he never lost his passion for painting and was an accomplished artist, working mostly representationally with oil on canvas. His training in art began in childhood at private art schools and museums and went on throughout his undergraduate and graduate studies. During all his time studying and practicing medicine, Ron continued to pursue his artistic goals with studies at the renowned Art Students League in New York City and, privately, with several well-known New York City artists. He worked from life, setting up the composition in his north light studio or going outdoors to paint the landscape. His paintings have been exhibited in New York's Knickerbocker Artists Club, the Ridgewood Art Institute in New Jersey, the Springfield Art League, and the Springfield Museum of Art in Massachusetts. His work has been shown at several galleries across the country, and he was a featured artist at the Christopher Queen Galleries, in Duncans Mills, California, where his works continue to be exhibited.

Ron enjoyed all aspects of life, especially time spent with his family, his mountain biking buddies, and painting. He cherished his friendships made along the way of life and will be forever in our hearts.

His family held a private memorial. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Ron's memory to: Yankee Golden Retriever (Christine's parents' beloved Ducan came from there); Rescue Inc. (Lauren's beloved Rosie came from there); Sweet Paws Rescue (Lauren's beloved Hopscotch came from there); Northeast Animal Shelter (Sam's beloved Henry and Eloise came from there); Kaplan Family Hospice House (who gave Ron the best last day and to whom we are eternally grateful for their care and compassion).

Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at the Eustis & Cornell Funeral Home website.

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Elizabeth Goodman, Pastor

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Find us on Facebook too.

November Wildlife Report
Birds to Bears

We are headed for the shortest and darkest of days, literally. Dark is a good thing especially when we can get outside and enjoy the night sky, the quiet. Inside we can crawl into our beds and settle to a peaceful time, undistracted by all that daytime input.

Some of us mammals even relax into a well-planned deep sleep. The most familiar of these is the North American Black Bear, one of the "Seven Sleepers." Before the scientists got so fussy with their measurements, we called this sleep "hibernation," and the seven sleeper mammals from around here are the bears, chipmunks, bats, jumping mice, skunks, and raccoons.

All these warm-blooded mammals do go to sleep in a safe place for getting through the cold dark time. We don't use the word "hibernate" very much any more because there are such varied forms of this winter sleep.

Even if we feel friendly toward our bears, many folks look forward to the bears' sleeping time because it seems safe to put out bird feeders without risking damage to them. Maybe we used to feed the birds all summer and enjoy their presence close to our windows, and our porches, but now we wait for winter and wonder exactly when those big furry neighbors will disappear for a while.

This year, the last time anyone has told me of a bear visitor was early in November. The photo at the top by Julie Shapiro shows a large, well-fed, bear in the back yard. Julie has also seen a bear with cubs crossing Hupi Road right around that same time in November.

The latest I've ever heard of an up and active black bear was a few years back and it was right at Thanksgiving time. This year Stacy Wallach who lives by Stevens Pond or Lake had a bear visitor, also in early November, tipping over a potted chrysanthemum near the house (at right).

Besides these bear sightings, the reports this time have been mostly about birds, plus one "pee-wee football" of a young porcupine. Steve Moore saw this junior quill pig crossing Blue Hill Road the first week in November, headed for the cemetery.

Erik Jensen took a lovely photograph (at right) of a sharp-shinned hawk one warm misty day, perched in bare branches, with sparkling drops of water decorating the twigs. These small hawks are hard to distinguish from the slightly larger Cooper's hawks, and both species may hang around bird feeders hoping to catch a small bird. Sometimes the small birds are aware of the hawk's presence and will suddenly freeze, holding absolutely still, so as not to draw attention to themselves.

Cindy Hoogs sent a bird report, which included a Cooper's hawk at her place, also a male bluebird banging on the windows of the Hoogs' house, "while his female mate looked on in wonder." A blue-headed vireo visited their place, too, the first one Cindy has seen there. They have a somewhat blue head, maybe more grey than blue, and a striking set of white "spectacles."

PLAY GROUP

South Berkshire Kids Playgroup

Monterey Library

Thursdays, 10 to 11 a.m.

We are bringing our playgroup fun back Monterey Library!

Join us for free play, storytime, songs and more!! Best for families with children ages birth to 5. This program is free and open to the community, no registration required.

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The Hoogs' bird report goes on to list a flock of cedar waxwings eating crabapples, and fifty to seven-five Canada geese in the hayfield, for at least two days in a row. There was also a great blue heron walking across the driveway, unconcerned and unhurried, while Cindy stopped the car and waited. Paul DePreter wrote of a heron at his place nearby last month, similarly unworried by people, and apparently foraging in the mulch and dry leaves around the place, instead of in shallow water wetlands. We usually think of them in the productive swamps.

The Hoogs bird reporters often stop by Brewers Pond and lately they have seen geese, mallards, and what looks like a hooded merganser there.

Anna Poirier keeps the feeders going at her place on New Marlborough Road and has been rewarded by the visits of a red-breasted nuthatch. Anna says she hasn't seen one in a long time. She also reports ruby-crowned kinglets and all the favorite regulars: white-breasted nuthatches, chickadees, titmice, red-bellied woodpeckers, as well as the more familiar downy and hairy woodpeckers. She has seen juncos and white-throated sparrows, too.

Like Cindy Hoogs and Paul DePreter, Anna saw a "terrestrial" great blue heron stalking prey in the fields by Gould Farm. "It has a keen ability to crouch and slide just under the bottom wire of the electric fence. Magic—on one side, and then suddenly on the other side."

Another exception to the birds and bears list this time, besides that small porcupine, is the glorious crab spider on a mullein leaf, photographed by Mary Kate Jordan (lower right). At first glance it is hard to count all eight legs, since these spiders hold their two front longest legs close together, on each side. This gives them the "crab" look, unless you know enough about crabs to understand they have even more legs than spiders do. They do have two big long front pincers, though. There are many species of "crab spiders" and many belong to the genus Xysticus, which is more fun than "crab" and more accurately descriptive, if you speak Greek.

Lin Saberski caught this image of seven Canada geese swimming in a line on Lake Garfield.

Thanks, everyone, for keeping us all posted with your wild news and photographs. We, too, are wild. Thoreau said, "In wildness is the preservation of the world," and he was talking about the wildness within all of us. It connects us.

—Bonner McAllester
(413) 528-9385, bonnermca@gmail.com

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Our town website is a great way to access information about the town.

— Steven Weisz, Chair
John Weingold and Justin Makuc
Monterey Select Board
(steve@montereyma.gov)
(johnweingold@gmail.com)
(justin@montereyma.gov)

For agendas and links to watch public meetings of towns and boards, go to the town website (above), select the board or commission of interest, and choose "Agendas" or "Minutes." Links for online viewing are listed in the agendas.

You can also search YouTube.com for more recent meeting videos. Search "Monterey, MA Board & Committee Meetings" and click on videos.

Town Contact Information

Emergency! 911
Town Administrator:
528-1443 x111
admin@montereyma.gov
(for town boards and misc. questions)
Assessor: 528-1443 x115
assessors@montereyma.gov
Building Department: 528-1443 x118 buildingsafety@montereyma.gov
Community Center: 528-3600
calendar@ccmonterey.org
Fire Department (non-emergency): 528-3136
chief@montereyma.org
Highway Department: 528-1734
dpw1@montereyma.gov
Library: 528-3795
montereylibrary@gmail.com
Police Department (non-emergency)**:** 528-3211, Alt./Emergency 528-3211
mpdchief@montereyma.gov
Post Office: 528-4670
SBRSD (Schools): (413)-229-8778
Tax Collector: 528-1443 x117
montereytax@yahoo.com
(for questions about your tax bill)
Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113
clerk@montereyma.gov
Town website: Montereyma.gov, under each department, for office hours.

New Outreach Coordinator

We are very happy to introduce our new outreach coordinator, Emily Hadsell (photo at right). She comes to us after a stint in AmeriCorps, where she won awards in two states, Louisiana and Colorado, for her work. She says "I am very grateful for this opportunity to work closely with the council on aging and the Monterey community. I've helped a variety of communities across the country, so to be able to make a difference in a community closer to home means so much! I look forward to meeting and working with you all." We are looking forward to it, too! She will be at our next council meeting, which is our annual meeting, on Monday, December 13, at 10 a.m., at the Monterey Community Center. Everyone is welcome. We have recently had two long-time board members retire, Norma Champigny and Ruth Champigny, and we miss them. We are actively recruiting for new board members, as well as the chair and the clerk. Please consider joining the board—it is a great opportunity to plan activities and serve the Monterey community.

Parkinson's Support Group

The initial Parkinson's Support Group meeting was held November 8 at the Monterey Library. The participants agreed on the mission statement, which is to "improve the lives of people with Parkinson's disease and the lives of their caregivers." As a group, they also felt that Thursday was a better day to meet than Monday. So the next meeting will be Thursday, December 2, from 2 to 4 p.m., at the library. They decided they weren't ready to break up into groups yet, and want to get to know one another better. If you are interested, please call the council on aging at (413) 528-1443, ext 247.

Wellness Clinic

The monthly wellness clinics are starting up again, courtesy of the Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative, through the board of health. The first will be on Thursday, December 9, from 2 to 3 p.m., at the community center. They are able to perform blood pressures, check medications, and educate us about Covid vaccinations and precautions. We expect they will continue on the second Thursday of the month, 2 to 3 p.m., at the community center.

— Kyle Pierce

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Calendar

MCC- Monterey Community Center

Tuesdays:

Chair yoga with Connie Wilson, 10 a.m., MCC.

Bridge and cards, 1 p.m. MCC.

Wednesdays: Ping pong, 3 p.m., MCC.

Saturdays: Ping pong, 2 p.m., MCC.

Thursdays: South Berkshire Kids Playgroup, 10 to 11 a.m. See page 2.

Thursday, December 2: Parkinson's support group, 2 to 4 p.m., library. See page 26.

Saturday, December 4: Hockey Rink setup at 9:30, firehouse pavilion. Help needed. See page 10.

Thursday, December 9: Wellness clinic, MCC, 2 to 3 p.m. See page 26.

Friday, December 10: "Meditation for Turbulent Times" with Sandrine Harris, 4 p.m., MCC. See page 3.

Beginning of *Tracks and Trails* show in Knox Gallery. See page 18.

Game night with Aldeth, 6 p.m., MCC. See page 3.

Saturday, December 11: Gould Farm holiday market, 3 to 7 p.m.

Monday, December 13: Council on aging annual meeting, 10 a.m., MCC. See page 26.

Tuesday, December 14: Movie night, 7 p.m., library. Showing *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. See page 17.

Council on Aging Services

Foot Nurse: Beverly Dunn is available for home visits. Call (413) 446-2469 to get an appointment. Council on aging covers $10 of her fee.

Wellness Clinic: First Thursdays at community center. 2 to 3 p.m. Blood pressures, check medications, and educate us about Covid vaccinations and precautions.

Transportation: For seniors and disabled folks to Great Barrington/ Pittsfield through the Great Barrington Council on Aging. Call (413) 528-1881. Forty-eight-hour notice required.

Safety Vests: Vests for walkers and bikers are available free at the town hall through the council on aging.

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may be sent via email to montereynews9@gmail.com or to PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. For advertising rates or other information, contact the Editor at (413)528-4007 or email.

Letter

Why Stay?

In mid-November John Weingold declared that he will not attend any more select board meetings so long as Steven Weisz is chair, leaving the third seat vacant, possibly until the May elections. My question is simple— "Then why stay?"

The voters put him in office reasonably expecting him to do the job. This news likely means more than six months with only two board members facing the major task of preparing the budget. A lifelong resident of Monterey said to me recently, "He just needs to do the work." A basic expectation. This is an affront to the voters that he won't.

— Stephen Moore

Editor's Note: This letter is a personal opinion and does not represent an opinion by the Monterey News*, which takes no position on issues.*

Police Emergency Contacts

- For real emergencies, call **911**.
- The email address for the dispatch service is:

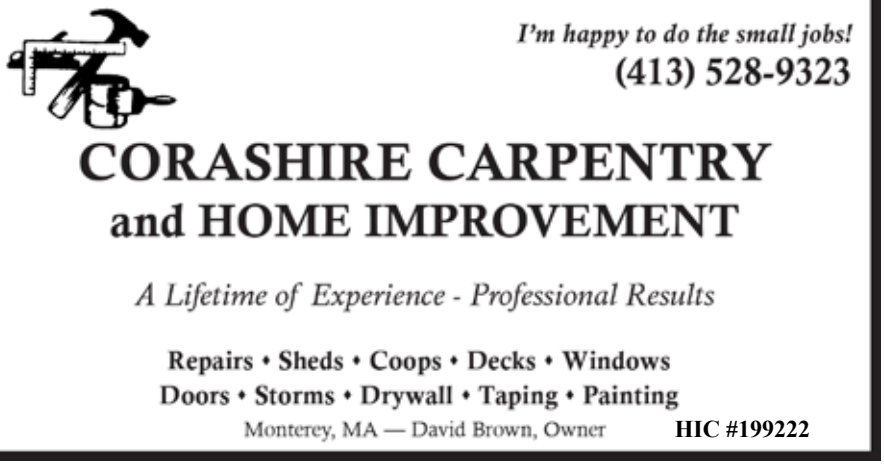
  dispatch@sdb.state.ma.us.

- Police dispatch service number:

  (413) 236-0925.

- For non-emergencies to contact the Monterey Police Department, call:

  528-3211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Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

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Beginning July 2021

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Wednesday.....9 a.m.–1 p.m.
.....& 1:30–5 p.m.
Thursday.....9 a.m.–1 p.m.
.....& 4–8 p.m.
Friday..... 4–8 p.m.
Saturday.....9 a.m.–1 p.m.
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Contributions from local artists this month: Rachel Jo Arnow, p. 10; Maureen Banner, p. 11; George Emmons, p. 15.

See Fiber Connect's article on page 5.

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